

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DOTE-00 SCI-06 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-11 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 AID-20 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 213

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E. O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: OTRA EGEN

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF VENEZUELAN MINISTER
OF COMMUNICATIONS

REF: A. STATE 107398; B. STATE 109928

1. ACCOMPANIED BY COMMERCIAL ATTACHE FALK, I CALLED THIS MORNING ON MINISTER BUSTAMANTE AND INDICATED WHAT DATES (REF A) SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BRINEGAR MIGHT RECEIVE HIM. BUSTAMANTE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT BE ABSENT FROM VENEZUELA JULY 24-27 BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CELEBRATION OF THE 150 TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAVAL BATTLE OF MARACAIBO. HE WOULD, HOWEVER, BE FREE JULY 9-13.

2. WE SUGGESTED (REF B) THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO SEND AN ADVANCE REPRESENTATIVE TO GO OVER SOME OF THE POINTS MADE IN THAT TELEGRAM. I OFFERED PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT GENERAL ASUAJE, DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, WOULD BE MOST LOGICAL MAN, AND WITH THIS THE MINISTER EMPHATICALLY AGREED BECAUSE OF HIS INTEREST IN GETTING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM FAA.

3. ON THIS POINT I UNDERLINED A STATEMENT IN SECRETARY BRINEGAR'S LETTER OF MAY 7 THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PROSPECT OF
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GRANT AID OR OF OUR DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDING TECHNICAL HELP ON A NON- REIMBURSABLE BASIS. I POINTED OUT THAT FAA EXPERTS WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY WORKED FOR MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, ESPECIALLY AT MAIQUETIA AIRPORT, HAD HAD THEIR SALARIES AND EXPENSES PAID BY THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT, BUT THIS WAS INFINITELY LESS EXPENSIVE THAN SHOULD GOV CONTRACT WITH PRIVATE FIRMS FOR SIMILAR SERVICES.

4. TO THIS BUSTAMANTE AGREED AND SAID HE FULLY COMPREHENDED THE IMPORT OF SECRETARY BRINEGAR'S LETTER. JUST TO MAKE SURE, I LEFT HIM A COPY WITH THE SALIENT POINTS UNDERLINED IN RED INK. WHEN MINISTER SAID SOMETHING ABOUT AN INTEREST IN ACQUIRING A CERTAIN TURBINE, I RECALLED THAT SEVERAL YEARS AGO I HAD INTRODUCED PRESIDENT KEARNS OF EXIMBANK AND THAT POSSIBLY THIS WOULD BE A CHANNEL FOR FINANCING SUCH A PURCHASE.

5. COMMENT: MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS IS UNDER NO ILLUSIONS THAT HE CAN " GET SOMETHING FOR NOTHING" DURING HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO WASHINGTON. HE ASKED ME TO WAIT A DAY OR TWO BEFORE HE MADE A DEFINITIVE COMMITMENT (UNDOUBTEDLY BECAUSE HE MUST FIRST CHECK THIS OUT WITH PRESIDENT CALDERA). HE SAID ALSO THAT SINCE HE HAD NOT TALKED WITH GENERAL ASUAJE, HE COULD NOT AS OF TODAY BE CATEGORIC IN PROMISING THAT ASUAJE WOULD BE HIS ADVANCE AGENT. I THINK, HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE BUSTAMANTE WILL COME AND THAT HE WILL SEND ASUAJE A FEW DAYS AHEAD OF TIME. IF HE DOES VISIT WASHINGTON, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT IN ADDITION TO CALLING ON OUR SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION HE MIGHT BE RECEIVED BY UNDER SECRETARY CASEY, WHOM HE MET HERE BRIEFLY DURING SECRETARY ROGERS' VISIT LAST MONTH; AND THAT, IN VIEW OF OUR INTEREST IN THE FORTHCOMING INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW AT SAO PAULO NEXT SEPTEMBER HE BE PLACED IN TOUCH WITH INTERESTED OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AS WELL AS TRANSPORTATION WITH THE VIEW TO POSSIBLY LINING UP A MARKET IN THE MINISTRY OVER WHICH HE PRESIDES.
MCCLINTOCK

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